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ABSTRACT

During the past decade, there has been a simultaneous decline in the number of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers and an increase in the number of students among these same groups of minorities (referenced in this text as people of color). An array of topics relative to this decline were explored as the subject of a 1991 nationwide interactive teleconference entitled "Who's Missing from the Classroom: The Need for Minority Teachers." This monograph examines the significance of diversity and the implications of the decline of teachers of color; factors that shape the decline; and solutions for reversing the decline. Strategies emerging from the teleconference reflect the realization that the current pool of the most able students of color are not attracted to teaching; a pool of prospective teachers must be fashioned from those who have traditionally bypassed college and found careers in other occupations; students of color must be held academically accountable at the same level as are white students; and new commitments of resources must be made for recruitment. Items for further discussion, an appendix presenting brief biographies of panelists and 32 references are offered. (LL)

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TRENDS AND ISSUES PAPER • NO. 9

# WHO'S MISSING FROM THE CLASSROOM: THE NEED FOR MINORITY TEACHERS

Mwangaza Michael-Bandele

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON TEACHER EDUCATION
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One Dupont Circle • Suite 610 • Washington, DC 20036-1186

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Mwangaza Michael-Bandele

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade there has been a simultaneous decline in the number of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers and an increase in the number of students among these same groups of people of color. This demographic shift has ushered national attention to a variety of concerns that are centered not simply around the number of teachers of color needed to equal the number of students of color, but more so, the tremendous value of diversity in this democracy. In an effort to expand this issue beyond simple number balancing, an array of topics relative to the decline of teachers of color were explored as the subject of a 1991 nationwide interactive teleconference entitled "Who's Missing from the Classroom: The Need for Minority Teachers." It is the intent of this monograph to examine some of the issues surrounding the absence of teachers of color from the classroom and to investigate the implications of the decline for equitable education in America.

The content of this monograph reflects analysis of the central concerns of the declining number of teachers of color as set forth during the April 10, 1991 teleconference. The teleconference was organized in three segments. "The Value of Diversity" was the topic of the initial segment, which included panelists Carlton E. Brown, Hampton University; Raymond Castro, Tomas Rivera Center; Lisa Delpit, Morgan State University; and Phillip C. Schlechty, Center for Leadership in School Reform. While the importance of teachers of color as role models for students of color is often stressed, there remains a multitude of additional assets these teachers bring to the classroom, which the panel addressed. Specific "Problems and Solutions" were explored in the second segment by Elaine Witty, Norfolk State University; Sydney Lancaster, National Urban League; and Rochelle Clemson, University of Maryland-College Park. Many of their suggestions are included in this text. William Smith, U.S. Department of Education; Felipe Veloz, National Association of State Boards of Education; Gary D Fenstermacher, President of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; and William Blakey, Clohan and Dean, Attorneys at Law led the final teleconference segment in an insightful discussion on the "Impact of Policy" development on the decline of teachers of color.

Throughout the teleconference there was one common refrain articulated by the panels, the studio audience, and the interactive nationwide audience: reversing the decline of teachers of color is a national concern that must include the collaborative efforts of every segment of society. The implications of the decline for preserving and advancing diversity in this democracy demands concerted attention.

## A NOTE ON *MINORITY*

The term *minority* gained national acceptance some years ago when it referred almost exclusively to the African American population and a small number of Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. These cultural/racial groups made up a relatively small percentage of the United States population and constituted a distinct segment of the population. The term served to denote all people who were non-White. Today the term is inappropriate as a designation for African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans for three primary reasons. First, its reference to four different cultural groups assumes that the essential characteristics and needs of all the groups are the same and can be addressed en masse. The issues of Hispanics differ from those of African Americans, Asians, and Native Americans and as is the case with all cultural/ethnic groups, need to be specifically addressed. Second, the term minority is inaccurately used to reference groups of non-Whites who comprise, in many school districts, counties, and states, the numerical majority. Third, minority infers an inferior status. Implicit in the categorization of people as minorities is their relationship to the *majority* who, as a result of their larger numbers, make decisions to which the minority is forced to adhere. In a democratic society, the majority rule and the minority are expected to abide by such rulings. Not only have African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans expanded numerically beyond the quantitative realm of the term minority, but the vague meaning of the term has encouraged its adoption by any segment of the population that is anything other than White, heterosexual, and male. Hence, minority has come to refer to such populations as the physically disabled, all women, senior citizens, and gay people. As applied to African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans, the term minority is perceived by many to be obsolete, misleading, and derogatory. Therefore, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans will be referenced in this text as *people of color*.

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DIVERSITY AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECLINE OF TEACHERS OF COLOR

Often the conversations that center around the decline in the number of teachers of color focus on the numerical disparities between African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers and White teachers. Whites comprise 89.7% of the nation's teaching force (Snyder, 1987; National Education Association, 1987) and 71.2% of the student population, while African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans make up only 10.3% of the teaching force and more than 30% of the student population. While the number of students of color climbs, the number of teachers of color rapidly declines. More specifically, African Americans represent 16.2% of the children in public school and only 6.9% of the teaching force. Hispanics make up 9.1% of the children in public school and 1.9% of the teaching force. Asian/Pacific Islanders are 2.5% of the children in public school, but only 0.6% of the teachers (Snyder, 1987; National Education Association, 1987).

These percentages reflect an imbalance that reaches far beyond what the numbers convey. This circumstance presents a host of concerns that include: (a) the impact on culturally isolated White students who are not given the opportunity to learn from teachers of ethnic backgrounds different than themselves, (b) the lack of teacher role models for children of color to emulate, and (c) the academic demise of students whose cultural characteristics are unrecognized and devalued. The implications of the decline of teachers of color are far reaching, especially in a society where diversity abounds and individual difference and the freedom to express that difference stand at the base of its national ideals. In such a nation it is no less than imperative that the teaching force, the primary conduit through which the citizenry is educated, is itself diverse. When that diversity is threatened, the implications for teacher education are enormous.

The tremendous value of diversity in a democracy, and the role of teachers of color in perpetuating its value, are often overshadowed by conversations that focus on accommodating differences. During the civil rights era of the 1960s, non-Whites were encouraged to assimilate into the dominant Euro-American culture. This process diminished the value and appreciation for cultural diversity and negated the understanding that varieties of people represent varieties of learning opportunities. Moving beyond the inclination to assimilate cultural/ethnic differences to an understanding that diversity is an

asset rather than a problem to overcome, is a significant challenge facing the education community. Teleconference panelist Raymond Castro articulated one valuable aspect of diversity when he asserted that "diversity is not just an issue of color but a concept that encourages diversity of thought—the exchange of different ideas and ways to approach problems." The shift in demographics, of an increasing number of students of color, has given momentum to the idea that a culturally diverse educational environment is fertile ground where expanded thinking, unbound by traditional monocultural confines, can flourish. Among other things, education is expected to provide students with the ability and motivation to inquire and seek information beyond the obvious and that which is explicitly set forth during the educational process (Paul, Binker, Jensen, & Kreklau, 1990). Students then, once exposed to teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds, are likely to experience perspectives of a wider variety than what may exist in a culture-specific learning environment.

Teachers of color serve as vital links to an understanding of and appreciation for cultural differences. According to Irvine (1990) they must serve as "cultural translators" in order that children learn to function effectively in an increasingly diverse America. Between 1985 and 2000, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and other people of color will comprise 29% of the net additions to America's work force and will be more than 15% of the work force by the year 2000. The cumulative impact of the changing ethnic and racial composition of the labor force will be dramatic. As a result, the mainstay of the economy, White males, will comprise only 15% of the additions to the labor force by the year 2000. The years ahead will demand an understanding of and an ability to interact with people from varied cultural backgrounds. The ability to work effectively with diverse populations will be an essential work skill (Hudson Institute, 1987). The presence of teachers of color in the classroom is likely to contribute to the attainment of this skill.

Perhaps the most obvious and widely recognized need for African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers centers upon the role modeling they provide for students in general, and for children of color specifically. The very presence of teachers of color in the classroom confirms that African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American children can achieve academic success and reinforces the potential of such success (Dilworth, 1990). The proliferation of literature that reports the underachievement of children of color makes it especially important that these children see and know otherwise about themselves and do not fulfill self-defeating prophecies. African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers serve as primary examples of achievement that can positively influence the self-perceptions and academic achievement of children of color. Such teachers are essential role models.

The presence of teachers of color in the classroom also challenges the less articulated notion, that Whites are best suited for positions of leadership. Because Whites are in positions of authority more frequently than any other ethnic/racial group, it is easy to conclude erroneously that they are better suited to lead. This notion is fueled when students' first, and perhaps most influential, role models of authority are so often White. The presence of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American classroom teachers begins to dismantle this notion and encourages all students to view people of color as leaders. The ability to see through preassigned characterizations of racial/ethnic groups is crucial to the development of a society where differences are not simply tolerated but celebrated.

In step with the population shift is the increased momentum to develop curricula that reflect and meet the needs of the students served. Multicultural course development is a very logical response to the abundance of research that indicates a strong relationship between student success and curriculum relevance (Gollnick & Chinn, 1986). Students demonstrate greater academic achievement when the subject matter reflects their cultural and social reality and is shared in a manner consistent with their values and social mores. While racial/ethnic background alone does not determine how effective or ineffective a teacher may be, good teachers are more likely to be even more effective when interacting with students whose racial/ethnic background the teacher understands and values (Dilworth, 1990). Hence, teachers of color, many of whom having lived and functioned effectively in the dominant Euro-American culture as well as in their own, may be characterized as *bicultural* and able to play a significant role in the success of multicultural education and ultimately in the success of the students the curriculum revisions are designed to help. Multicultural curricula are most likely to realize their greatest potential in the hands of a multicultural teaching force.

A less frequently noted aspect of the decline in the number of teachers of color is its negative impact on White students. Somewhere in the educational process that facilitates the acquisition of skills and knowledge, students should be encouraged to develop a perspective and appreciation of themselves that allows them to see and value others (Zimpher & Ashburn, 1992). This appreciation of others is nourished by knowledge of diverse cultural backgrounds. Such knowledge, which exceeds the boundaries of traditional classroom reading and listening experiences, is perhaps best gained through firsthand interaction and experiences with people from diverse populations. African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers can serve as ambassadors of cultural exchanges. Their presence offers possibilities of cultural interaction that are not often recognized and therefore are untapped.

People of color, born into the cultural experience of their particular ethnic/racial group, typically live a form of bi-cultural existence, amidst the dominant culture. Hence, on the one hand, African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American students come to understand and value the dominant culture and do not have the opportunity to learn the value and worth of their own. On the other hand, White students are born into the Euro-American culture and are socially steeped within it all of their lives. Under these circumstances, they are not likely to experience in a significant way different cultures, and therefore are less likely to understand and appreciate them (Dilworth, 1990).

Teachers of color can play a valuable role in breaking the cultural isolation common to White students. To interact with the working world of the 21st century, all Americans will need to be adept in intercultural communication, which is founded upon intercultural understanding. Teachers of color are well suited to facilitate an intercultural exchange that would help to alleviate cultural isolation common to White students. African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers represent the opportunity for White students to engage, interact with, observe, and question on a firsthand basis people different from themselves. There exist few, if any, environments, circumstances, or individuals better positioned to facilitate institutional and broad-based intercultural understanding than teachers of color. Against the backdrop of America's changing racial/ethnic composition, the importance of their presence is magnified.

In a nation that boasts of its culturally diverse population and the ability of its citizenry to work harmoniously within a democracy, it is essential that ethnic/racial differences are valued and not perceived as liabilities. Students deserve every opportunity to equip themselves adequately with the values and social skills required to interact effectively with people of diverse backgrounds. We are reminded then, as articulated by panelist Phillip Schlechty, that any consequential education reform efforts cannot be separated from the need for teachers of color. Welcoming the challenge, not simply to manage the increasing number of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American students, but to create a national perspective that recognizes the inherent value of diversity, is central to national development. Teachers of color are integral to this process.

## FACTORS THAT SHAPE THE DECLINE

The current decline in the number of teachers of color is the result of multiple occurrences over a relatively brief period of time. Between 1954 and 1970, many African American teachers, who constitute the largest and oldest subgroup of teachers of color, were dismissed, given nonteaching and lower-line teaching positions, or were not hired as a response to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 (Witty, 1982). Opposition by White school administrators to enforcement of the *Brown* decision manifest itself in the form of various state legislature-mandated job reclassifications and a host of evasive practices aimed at reducing and eliminating the role of African American teachers in the racially integrated classroom (Haney, 1978; Ethridge, 1979). During the 1960s and '70s, as the affects of the civil rights movement, the women's movement, affirmative action, and the prospect of equal rights took hold, people of color began to move into other occupations previously unavailable to them. This exodus was underscored by the relatively modest salaries teachers earned and the declining status associated with the profession. Teachers and college graduates alike were encouraged to explore professional careers in other arenas that garnered more respect and prestige than did teaching.

The historically Black institutions of higher education, which produced the largest number of African American teachers, experienced a stark reduction in teacher education students. From 1966 to 1977, the percentage of students awarded degrees in education from Black land grant colleges declined by 18.5% (Greer & Husk, 1989). Of the degrees awarded Black males between 1977 and 1976, 14.5% were in education. Six years later that percentage dropped to 10.5%. At the same time, Black females in education declined from 31.7% to 19% (Trent, 1984). Nationwide, African Americans earned 22.1% of all bachelor's degrees conferred in the field of education in 1977 and only 7.3% in 1989. Similarly, Hispanics earned 16.3% in 1977 and 7.7% 12 years later (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

The profession that had once been an important seat of power and influence in the African American community lost its appeal. As the American Council on Education (ACE) reported in 1987, the percentage of high school graduates entering college between 1976 and 1985 who indicated education as their major field of study, declined by 50%. Somehow the responsibility of shaping the minds of children, and its inherent power, was demoted to a lesser rung on the professional ladder. Teaching as a higher education focus became stereotypically reserved for those college graduates who were less likely to meet the academic rigors of other more highly respected professions. It is not

difficult to understand the occurrence of this shift, which continues to operate today, in a society where material gain, by and large, determines one's status. According to a 1990 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) survey, low salaries are one of the leading reasons why teachers of color are leaving the classrooms and people of color do not consider teaching as a career (Dilworth, 1990).

The impact of teacher competency tests has and continues to affect drastically the number of teachers of color. Expanding rapidly since the mid-70s from the southern region of the United States throughout the country in less than a decade, the competency movement has evolved into an elaborate practice that includes testing for admission, certification, and classroom effectiveness. Among the various teacher tests, the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) and the National Teachers Examination (NTE) are the most common. Documentation that reflects teacher testing activity in 19 states estimates that such examinations have eliminated some 37,717 prospective candidates and teachers of color. This estimate includes 21,515 African Americans; 10,142 Hispanics; 1,626 Asians; and 716 Native Americans. Regardless of the state and type of competency tests used, according to Smith, disproportionate numbers of prospective teachers of color are being screened from the teaching profession (1987).

Against the backdrop of the number of White examinees that successfully pass the NTE examination, the failure rate for prospective teachers of color is alarming. While 93% percent of White examinees passed the examination between 1982-84, only 39% percent of African Americans and 74% percent of Hispanics scored in the pass range.

A closer look at historically Black colleges and universities, which have produced more than half of the bachelor's degrees African Americans earn in the 19 southern states, will reveal the impact of certification tests on prospective African American teachers. Many of these same states have instituted mandatory teacher certification tests, which large numbers of African American graduates are not passing. In Louisiana, the pass rate for prospective Black teachers is 15% and for Whites is 78%. Similarly, 87% of White prospective teachers in Georgia pass the exam while 34% of the Black graduates pass. In a total of 19 southern states, White graduates are passing these tests at rates ranging from 62% to 90% and Black graduates are passing at a range of 10% to 70% (Smith, 1987). Given such disparities between the passing rate of Whites and people of color, it is reasonable to suspect that many students of color interested in the profession are deterred as a result of the failure rate. Although the ability of the NTE or of any test of cognitive knowledge to

appraise teaching performance has not been determined, they continue to be used as the gatekeeper to the teaching profession throughout the nation.

The debate as to whether or not the certification and entrance exams are fair or useful tools by which to assess a teacher's ability in the classroom, raises the issue of preparedness. In 1980, only 32% of Black high school students were enrolled in the college prep track of their high schools (Baratz, 1986). The elements that have produced such a figure require further investigation.

During the teleconference segment concerned with problems and solutions, ACE Senior Scholar Reginald Wilson articulated his conviction that college-tracked high school students must take the appropriate math courses if they are to be adequately prepared. Wilson asserts that the subject of math is the "cornerstone of college preparation" and needs to be an integral part of the high school curriculum for students of color. Unfortunately, many students of color and low-income students are not afforded the same opportunities as White students to take these courses, and when such students do find themselves in such courses, they are too often the recipients of inferior education (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990).

The RAND Corporation recently published the results of a research project that documents how the uneven distribution of opportunities for African American, Hispanics, and Native Americans to learn science and mathematics is contributing to unequal outcomes (Oakes, Ormseth, Bell, & Camp, 1990). It was observed that at schools with large concentrations of low-income and non-Asian children of color, a disproportionate percentage of teachers judge their science and mathematics students to have low ability. Hence, teachers serving these students place less emphasis on developing inquiry and problem-solving skills and on the practical value and application of classroom information. Conversely, high-track teachers are reported to direct their college-tracked students along more higher-ordered cognitive tasks and appear to be more enthusiastic and willing to push their students to work harder. These findings underscore the National Science Foundation's concern that inequalities may be the result of the "failure to recognize and develop talent," and the erroneous belief that many students lack the ability to learn mathematics and science" (Oakes et al., 1990). Because many children of color are constantly characterized as "underachievers" across all academic disciplines, the National Science Foundation's concerns may be applicable for course work beyond math and science.

SAT scores and the declining number of students of color that enroll in college further reflect a disparity in high school preparation. Between 1976 and 1985, Whites scored 30% to 40% higher than African Americans. While

scores for African American students have risen over the last 10 years, the numerical increases have not been large. In 1976, 33.5% of African American high school graduates between 18 and 22 years old were enrolled in college. By 1983, only 27% in this age group were collegiates. And of all the African American students enrolled in 1980, 42% attended 2-year colleges, where there is no opportunity to obtain a bachelor's degree (Graham, 1987).

In 1976, Hispanics earned 2% of all bachelor's degrees conferred and 2.9% in 1989. These percentages reflect a numerical increase of some 12,000 graduates, which is primarily due to the record growth of the Hispanic population in the United States during the 1980s. During the same period, African Americans received 6.4% of bachelor's degrees and 5.7% respectively. These percentages reflect a decrease of approximately 1,000 graduates (Carter & Wilson, 1991).

Critical to an understanding of the decline in the number of teachers of color is the issue of inequitable education. In many instances, inequity may be identified as a primary reason for the "clog" when it produces, over and over again, students of color who are not academically prepared and sufficiently motivated to attend 4-year colleges. A case in point is the Milwaukee public school system. Recognizing the need to recruit prospective teachers of color, the University of Wisconsin system agreed to provide full-time tuition to all graduating students of color who wanted to become teachers and who held at least a 2.0 grade point average. Upon investigating the pool of potential applicants, it was discovered that less that 13% of students of color had grade point averages higher than 2.0 (Haberman, 1989). Fewer college-bound students of color will inevitably yield fewer teachers of color. Any effective strategies designed to reverse the trend of the declining number of teachers of color will need to consider the far-reaching effects of substandard education on the academic preparation of students of color, and the probability of negative stereotyping—spoken and unspoken—which limits their access to higher education in general and to teacher education specifically.

When African American, Hispanic, and Native American students are not sufficiently prepared in the elementary and/or secondary grades for the higher education track, they are less likely to attend college at all and will therefore never reach the threshold of teacher education. From 1976 to 1985, the percentage of Black high school graduates entering college decreased from 33.5% to 26.1%, even while the number of Black high school graduates continued to increase (American Council on Education, 1987). Bachelor's degrees awarded in education declined from 24% of the total of Black graduates in 1970 to 16% in 1981 (Garibaldi, 1986). Considering that Black enrollment in 4-year colleges has declined, while Blacks and other students of color

constitute 32% of the enrollment in business or proprietary schools and 19% of active duty military personnel, it is likely that students of color are being tracked away from a 4-year collegiate career (Greer & Husk, 1989).

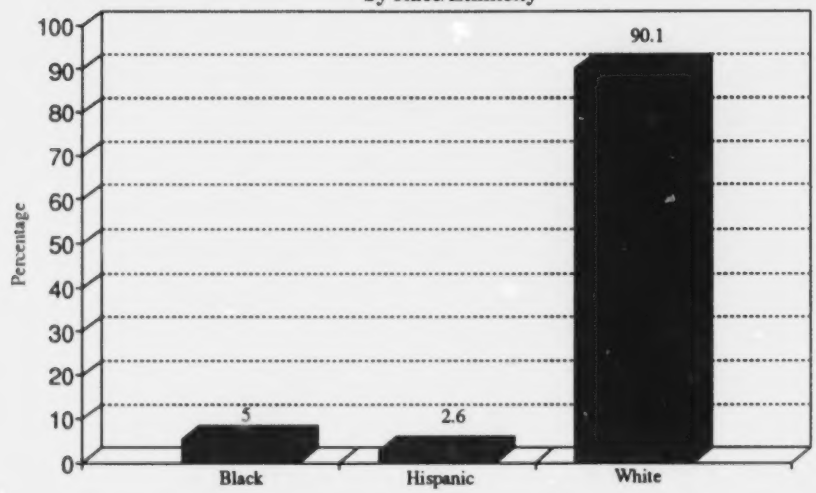
The shortage of teachers of color then is not simply a career choice issue. It is the manifestation of a variety of occurrences, not the least of which includes the problem of dismal K-12 schooling that effectively precludes the potential for college graduates, and therefore future teachers, before students even graduate from high school (Haberman, 1989).

Of the students of color that entered college, relatively few entered teacher education programs. In Indiana, where children of color comprise 21% of the student population, 1.7% of undergraduate students were African American and less than 1% were Hispanic and Asian. For Mississippi, where African Americans make up 51% of the student body, Asians 1%, and Hispanics less than 1%, only 22.9% of the students enrolled in teacher education were African American and less than 1% each were the enrollments of Hispanic and Asian teacher education students. And in Georgia, where 37% of the student population was African American, 1% was Hispanic, and 1% Asian, students of color comprised 8.8% of the total teacher education enrollments in 1987 (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1987; Office of Civil Rights, 1987).

In 1987, of the 91,013 individuals that received baccalaureate education degrees, 4,253 were African American and 2,223 were Hispanic. That is, 7.1% of the degree recipients were persons of color (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

Of the total number of undergraduates entering elementary and secondary education training in 1989, the number of African Americans and Hispanics was dramatically less than Whites (see Figures 1 and 2). Black student enrollment was less than 6% and Hispanic student enrollment less than 3%. White student enrollment was more than 90%.

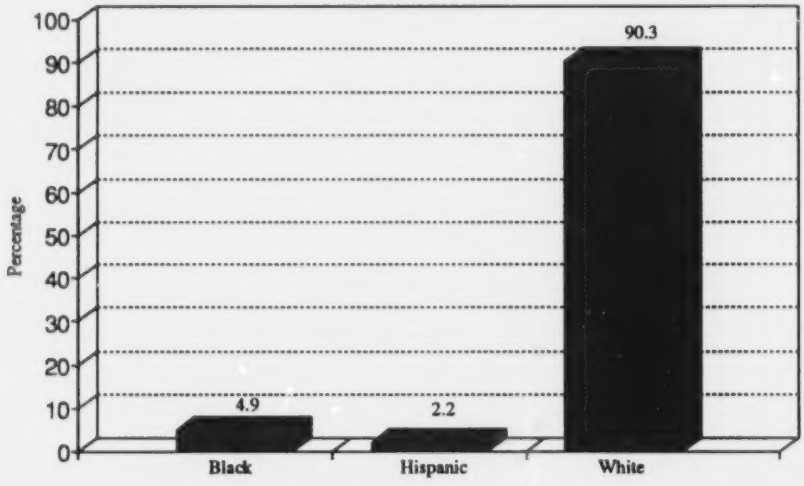
**Figure 1. Undergraduates Enrolled in Elementary Education Training, Fall 1989 by Race/Ethnicity**




Source: *AACTE Teacher Education Pipeline II: Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education Enrollments by Race and Ethnicity*, 1990, Washington, DC: AACTE.

NOTE: Asian and Native American enrollments totaled less than 1%.
Enrollment of students from other racial/ethnic backgrounds totaled 1.1%.

**Figure 2. Undergraduates Enrolled in Secondary Education Training, Fall 1989 by Race/Ethnicity**




Source: *AACTE Teacher Education Pipeline II: Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education Enrollments by Race and Ethnicity*, 1990, Washington, DC: AACTE.

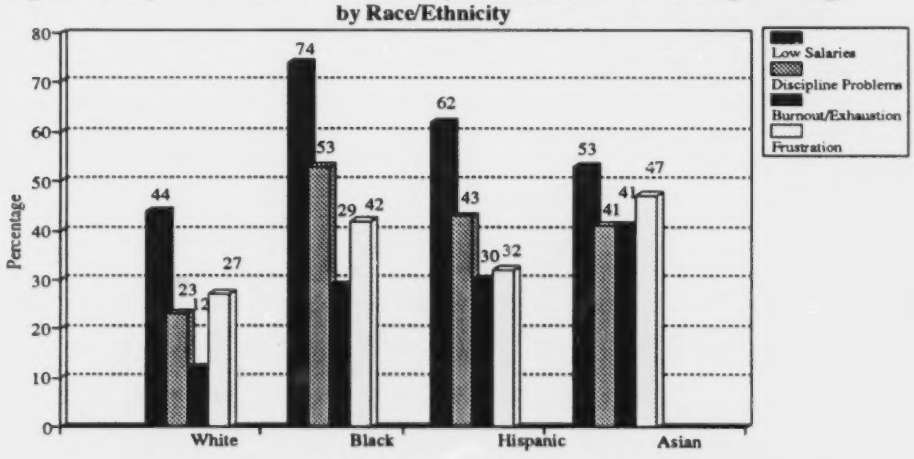
NOTE: Asian and Native American enrollments totaled less than 1% each.
Enrollment of students from other racial/ethnic backgrounds totaled 1.6%.

Attrition is an additional factor contributing to the decline in the number of teachers of color. In 1987-88, 5.1% of the African American teaching force left the profession; 2.9% of Hispanic teachers did not return to the work force in that same year.

While attrition is a naturally occurring phenomenon, which must be considered in the long-range projection for any profession, its impact on teachers of color is especially felt (Bobbitt, Faupel, & Burns, 1991). According to a 1988 Metropolitan Life Survey, 34% of teachers of color will leave teaching by 1993. In addition, 55% of teachers of color who have taught for less than 5 years indicated they will leave teaching in the next 5 years (Harris & Associates, 1988). It is reasonable to expect that retiring African American teachers, the senior most experienced of the teachers of color, will take with them years of accumulated wisdom and know-how pertinent to the education of the African American student—a body of knowledge sorely needed today.

There is a common ground that classroom teachers and prospective teachers share that reflects the reasons why they are discouraged with the teaching profession. According to a 1990 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) survey, the primary deterrent to the effort to retain and recruit teachers is low salary. Discipline problems, burn-out/exhaustion, and frustration follow on the list as the most common reasons why veteran teachers of color leave the profession and why young prospects never enter it (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Prospective Teachers' Reasons Why Minorities Are Not Entering Teaching, by Race/Ethnicity**




Source: *AACTE/Metropolitan Life Survey of Teacher Education Students*, 1990, Washington, DC: AACTE.

Over the last 10 years there has been increasing momentum within educational institutions to address the decline in the number of teachers of color. Like the many factors that have contributed to the decline, the array of responses have been varied. Some of the critical factors responsible for the diminishing number of teachers of color include:

- The dismal and inequitable education of students of color who are tracked in disproportionate numbers away from college, leaving a large number of graduates ill-prepared and unmotivated to pursue higher education.

- The administration of the NTE and other examinations, which has served to remove teachers of color from the classroom and deter others from pursuing the teaching profession.

- The administration of college entrance exams to students of color who are inadequately prepared and denied entrance to institutions of higher education.

- The diminished social value and prestige associated with the teaching profession and its subsequent lack of adequate monetary compensation.

- The lack of financial assistance made available to students of color who are prospective teacher education students.

- The lack of institutional support in recognition of the results of inequitable secondary education and the need for academic and social fortification.

- Inadequate articulation partnerships between 2-year and baccalaureate-awarding institutions.

- The increased number of professional opportunities for persons of color in fields other than teaching.

While these critical factors are not exhaustive, they represent some of the most pervasive and pressing inadequacies that continue to fuel the decline. Remedies for the decline will inevitably need to address them. The "four C's of recruitment," as outlined in the AACTE publication *Recruiting Minority Teachers* (1989), provide a context in which solutions may be assessed and applied. Activities meant to reverse the declining number of teachers of color must reflect a genuine *concern* for the issue that exceeds popular professional

rhetoric; a *commitment* manifested in significant monetary allocations and subsequent measurable results; an institution-wide *collaboration* that includes the sharing of information, resources, and responsibilities among the federal, state, and local communities; and a functional *creativity* bold enough to blaze new trails to unorthodox solutions.

## REVERSING THE DECLINE: SOLUTIONS

The decline in the number of teachers of color is the result of multiple national occurrences that have taken place over a relatively short period of time. As previously set forth, over the past 30 years or more, the unique and varied catalysts for the decline have eroded one of America's primary conduits for a greater appreciation of diversity. Hence, the national capacity to value and respect different ethnic/cultural backgrounds is affected. As the entire nation is affected, so must the nation become involved in reversing the trend. While those within the professional realm of education may be the most visible and active proponents for reversing the decreasing number of teachers of color, each professional and geographic segment of the country must assume responsibility for implementing solutions. The decline is not simply an educational problem, but rather a national problem, which requires the concerted effort of school systems, policymakers, students, parents, legislators, educators, scholars, and businesspersons.

While some of the suggested solutions that follow address an immediate need, it is recognized that long-range, permanent solutions must be broad based. They must encompass strategies that consider the historical as well as the contemporary sources of the decline and address integral yet sometimes uncomfortable issues—like racism—that shape the decline. Most importantly, advocates for reversing the decline must boldly and honestly work for long-term change: change that is evidenced by a steady increase in the number of students of color who enter, successfully navigate, and then exit the teacher education pipeline to become certified teachers.

### The Value of Diversity

During the first of the three teleconference segments, considerable time and attention was spent examining the value of diversity. In a significant way, this conversation formulates the basis for any consequential action intended to reverse the decline, that may follow. Determining first and foremost that diversity is an asset that must be preserved and advanced—particularly at this point in America's history when demographic shifts dictate a change in the nation's ethnic/cultural complexion—is essential. Such an understanding prohibits the mere accommodation of differences, but rather advances the inherent value of diversity. The teleconference panelists initiated useful dialogue meant to advance the value of diversity. Specific discussion and recommendations from the first panel included the following:

- The infusion of a multicultural curriculum throughout the national education system is vital to developing a national appreciation for diversity. Multicultural education would facilitate the broad-based dissemination of information about varying cultures. Such information has the potential to fill voids of ignorance among people of different backgrounds that are often the source of prejudice and intolerance, two major culprits behind the devaluation of diversity. Bridging such ignorance would advance the process of cultural enlightenment and move the nation significantly closer to acknowledging diversity as a prime national resource.

- Conversations and perceptions of diversity must begin to exceed physical human characteristics and reflect a need for diverse ways of thinking. People of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds bring different ideas for and ways to approach problems. Access to this neglected knowledge base has undetermined potential.

- Teacher training must include practical teacher experience in diverse communities. Hands-on interaction between future teachers and culturally diverse students and communities would provide a much needed opportunity for teachers to know and appreciate better the particular needs of various ethnic groups. Such an opportunity would teach them how best to utilize the information gained through the formal teacher training process to meet the real life needs of varied students. Through such a college/community partnership, the teacher education knowledge base, relative to affective multicultural teaching strategies, may be enhanced.

## Problems and Solutions

The second teleconference panel provided discussion centered on the identification of problems and solutions for the recruitment and retention of teachers of color. There were a number of very specific strategies offered that reflect the collective analysis and insight of the panel participants on how to retain and recruit effectively. Some of the strategies articulated included:

- Improve the quality of instruction at the K-12 level, which would yield a greater pool of college-bound students of color and hence, an increased number of potential teacher education students. Such improvement in quality is likely to provide students with a positive example of the teaching profession and encourage them, based on their own positive learning experiences, to consider pursuing the profession.

- Direct recruitment strategies to formerly enlisted military personnel. This group includes a large number of people of color who are often undecided about their career choice.

- Recruit teachers of color from folding businesses/downsizing corporations.

- Direct recruitment strategies to college students who have not declared their major course of study.

- Develop a larger and more effective network of elementary and secondary school-based teacher training programs that interest and prepare students for the teaching profession at an early age.

- Extend to students frequent and direct invitations to join the teaching profession, which include pertinent "how to" information.

- Allocate greater financial resources to educational systems to enhance the working conditions of teachers, which would positively effect the number recruited and retained in the profession. The popular notion that an increase in teachers' salaries is the more desired use of financial support is challenged by research that shows teachers prefer to use financial support to improve working conditions.

- Allocate sufficient monetary support for a long-term financial commitment to provide: tuition grants for teacher education, academic assessment and enrichment programs on campus that would facilitate graduation and certification, and social support that would nurture students and encourage their success.

- Structure teacher education programs so that class scheduling is convenient for persons with daytime responsibilities.

- Maintain information campaigns that inform the national community of the crisis of the decline. Community organizations, particularly churches and cultural centers, can serve as effective information dissemination and recruitment referral agencies.

## The Impact of Policy

The issue of policy and its impact on reversing the decline was the subject of the third and final teleconference segment. Considering America's top-

down action orientation, the implementation of favorable policies from the appropriate authorities, whether they be at the local, state, or federal level as well as university and K-12 administrators, could set institutional wheels in motion that could, like few other forces, dramatically reverse the decline. Provided here are a number of the third panel's suggestions:

- Allocate generous financial resources to support existing and future programs, that the policy-making organization/institution supports in theory.

- Connect the issue of the decline in the number of teachers of color to the national education agenda as a matter of policy.

- Policymakers should model the behaviors and procedures essential to reversing the decline in the number of teachers of color in their own practices and organizational make-up.

## CONCLUSION

Many years of research efforts, conferences, and publications on the declining number of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers has yielded recruitment and retention initiatives that have had varying degrees of success. A perusal of these initiatives indicate the challenges most commonly met: a lack of genuine commitment; insufficient finances; and the lack of collaboration. These three components of the teacher decline equation are key to advancing the effort to increase the pool of teachers of color. These components require individuals and institutional education leaders to assume greater responsibility for reversing the decline. It is time that teacher educators and others directly involved in this initiative direct increased energy into the development of their own pool of prospects. This strategy reflects the realization that:

- The current pool of the most able students of color are not attracted to teaching;
- A pool of prospective teachers must be fashioned from those who have traditionally bypassed college and found careers in other occupations; and
- These students of color must be held academically accountable at the same level as are White students.

These and similar initiatives will not materialize with the resources that are currently allocated to schools of education. New commitments of resources need to be made—resources to employ recruiters, comparable to the resources provided to athletic departments to recruit all-American athletes, are likely to yield an expanded team of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers. Such a team can serve as a vital bridge to a national appreciation of diversity at a time when America's rapid demographic shift demands it.

## FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

The following questions are presented in an effort to prompt continued discussions on the declining number of teachers of color.

- If indeed the survival of this nation depends on the successful education of our growing, diverse population, can this be accomplished without a diverse teaching force?
- What effect does the lack of teachers of color have on the students of color population? What are the benefits of having teachers of color for the majority students?
- To what degree have the efforts to recruit teachers of color been successful?
- Does the decline of teacher education students of color reflect the lack of qualified individuals?
- How can we counteract students' preferences to enter into professions with greater prestige.
- How can our colleges and universities better prepare future educators to teach culturally diverse populations? What strategies should be implemented to address this issue? What are the strengths of your institutions's teacher education program? The weaknesses?
- What can be done in this community to reduce the attrition rate of teachers of color?
- What exiting state/local policies or initiatives promote the development of a diverse teaching force? What policies, procedures, and programs can be developed to promote balance in the racial/ethnic composition of the teaching force?
- What role can the business community play in the effort to recruit teachers of color?

## APPENDIX: TELECONFERENCE PANELISTS AND PRETAPED COMMENTATORS*

### The Value of Diversity

*Carlton E. Brown*
Dr. Carlton E. Brown is Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Education at Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia. Dr. Brown has led the university in the restucturing of the teacher education program in an effort to integrate teacher education with central disciplines. He is an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Holmes Group and serves as National Chairman of the Committee on Multicultural Education of AACTE. He has been involved in a number of education research and development projects and is currently engaged in a national study for the education of Black males.

*Raymond E. Castro*
Dr. Raymond E. Castro is Vice President and Director of Policy Research for the Tomas Rivera Center in Claremont, California, a national institute for policy studies concerned with the identification of policies and programs that improve the quality of education, employment, and human services available to the Latino community. Dr. Castro has conducted extensive work in the area of multicultural education that includes the development of a counseling manual aimed at Chicano students in the community college. He has also planned and evaluated special intervention programs for Limited-English-Proficient students in California, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands. Dr. Castro has extensive teacher experience at the high school and college levels.

*Lisa D. Delpit*
Dr. Lisa D. Delpit is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. She has served as Coordinator of the Teacher Education Program at the University of Alaska, and Consultant for the North Solomons Provincial Government, Arawa, Papua, New Guinea. Dr. Delpit has many publications to her credit and is currently conducting Spencer Foundation-funded research for a volume on the issues of diversity in teacher education. She is also the Research Director for the Baltimore component of the Educational Testing Service/National Urban League Study entitled "On the Right Track," 1990. Dr. Delpit has been the recipient of several honors and awards including the 1990 MacArthur Fellowship.

* Participants' titles and affiliations reflect their positions at the time of the teleconference.

*Phillip C. Schlechty*
Dr. Phillip C. Schlechty is the founder and President of the Center for Leadership in School Reform in Louisville, Kentucky. He and his staff provide ideas, leadership, and support to schools and school districts engaged in, or that wish to begin, the task of restructuring. Dr. Schlechty is a former public school teacher and administrator, university professor, and associate dean. He is the author of numerous books and articles, the most recent of which are *Reform in Teacher Education: A Sociological View* and *Schools for the 21st Century: Leadership Imperatives for Educational Reform*. A widely traveled speaker and consultant, Dr. Schlechty brings a valuable perspective to such issues as leadership development, the restructuring of schools, and the management of change.

## Problems and Solutions

*Rochelle Clemson*
Dr. Rochelle Clemson is currently Director of Teacher Education Centers at the University of Maryland-College Park. She was Coordinator of Teacher Recruitment and Specialist in Teacher Education for the Maryland Department of Education and is a former President of the Maryland Association of Teacher Educators. Dr. Clemson has been a member of the Executive Board of the Maryland Multicultural Coalition and serves AACTE on its Committee on Multicultural Education. She has also coordinated several projects in urban school systems aimed at recruiting and training teachers to work with urban multicultural student populations.

*Sydney L. Lancaster*
Sydney L. Lancaster is Project Director of the Community Mobilization for Education Project for the National Urban League, Inc. in New York City. Ms. Lancaster assists Urban League affiliates in developing their capacity for mobilizing their communities to identify and seek needed educational improvements. Prior to joining the National Urban League, Ms. Lancaster served as Director of Education and Housing Services for the Canton Urban League, Canton, Ohio, where she assisted in the development of the Minority Teacher Preparation Program. This program was a collaborative effort by the Canton Urban League, the Canton Public School System, the University of Akron, and the Job Training Partnership Program, to address the shortage of minority teachers by recruiting, training, and preparing for certification persons with undergraduate degrees in fields other than education.

*Elaine P. Witty*
Dr. Elaine P. Witty is Dean of the School of Education at Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Virginia. Under Dr. Witty's leadership, the university hosted an annual conference on the shortage of Black teachers. Dr. Witty served as a member of the Governor's Commission on Education for All Virginians and the Task Force on Teacher Education and Certification, Virginia Department of Education. Dr. Witty has written numerous articles on a variety of education issues that include minority teacher shortages, teacher education, Black women administrators, and community-based education.

## The Impact of Policy

*William A. Blakey*
William A. Blakey is currently a partner at the Washington, D.C., law firm of Clohan and Dean, where he specializes in providing legal advice and public policy counsel for a range of institutions in the higher education community, including the United Negro College Fund. He was previously Staff Director and Counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives Education and Labor Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. Mr. Blakey is an active writer on subjects related to minority access to higher education, historically Black colleges and universities, affirmative action in employment and admissions, and intercollegiate athletics and academics.

*Gary D Fenstermacher*
Dr. Gary D Fenstermacher is Dean of the College of Education and Professor of Educational Foundations at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Dr. Fenstermacher is an active researcher and writer having published more than 70 articles and three books. His primary scholarly interests are the philosophy of research on teaching and the analysis of educational policy, particularly policy pertaining to teaching and teacher education. Dr. Fenstermacher is currently President of AACTE and a member of the Executive Committee of the NCATE. He is the recipient of several awards for his scholarship and teaching including Virginia Polytechnic's Wine Award for excellence in Teaching and the AACTE Award for Outstanding Writing in 1984.

*William L. Smith*
Dr. William L. Smith is currently Advisor to the U. S. Secretary of Education for Teacher Education. For more than 20 years, Dr. Smith has been at the forefront of teacher education, formerly holding the positions of Director of the Teacher Corps of the U.S. Office of Education and U.S. Commissioner of Education for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Dr. Smith's extensive national, as well as international, experience includes Chairmanship of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD)

International Conference on Inservice Training and Educational Change, Paris, France. Dr. Smith has several publications to his credit and an array of awards including the 1990 Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Senior Executive.

*Felipe Veloz*
Dr. Felipe Veloz is the Director of Bilingual Education and a Professor of Education at Eastern Oregon State College in LaGrande, Oregon. Dr. Veloz also serves as the Chairman of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). Dr. Veloz has an extensive list of publications that center on bilingual and bicultural education issues. His awards include an Award of Merit in recognition and appreciation for his contributions to the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

## Pretaped Commentators

*Gwendolyn Calvert Baker*
Dr. Gwendolyn Calvert Baker is President of the New York City Board of Education, which administers the educational system for approximately 940,000 students. She is currently the national Executive Director of the YWCA of the U.S.A. Previously, she was Vice President and Dean of Graduate and Children's Programs at the National Institute of Education. A frequent speaker, Dr. Baker is the author of many articles, research studies, and two books on multicultural education. She is currently working on updating her latest book, *Planning and Organizing for Multicultural Instruction*.

*John I. Goodlad*
Dr. John I. Goodlad is Professor of Education and Director of the Center for Educational Renewal at the University of Washington in Seattle. Goodlad has authored and coauthored over 25 books and written a host of published papers and articles. His 1984 publication, *A Place Called School*, received the outstanding Book of the Year Award from the American Educational Research Association and the Distinguished Book of the Year Award from Kappa Delta Pi. Dr. Goodlad has been involved in an array of educational reform programs and projects. He recently completed a comprehensive study of the education of educators in the United States, *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*.

*Patricia Albjerg Graham*
Dr. Patricia Albjerg Graham is Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is the Charles Warren Professor of the History of American Education. In addition to teaching and research activities, Dr. Graham serves on the boards of the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the Johnson Foundation, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. She is Past President of the National Academy of Education, and former Vice President of the American Historical Association.

*Harold L. Hodgkinson*

Dr. Harold L. Hodgkinson is the Director of the Center for Demographic Policy at the Institute for Educational Leadership where he conducts research on demographics and education. Dr. Hodgkinson is also Senior Advisor, American Council on Education; Trustee, Hartwick College; and member, Board of Overseers, Regents College, New York. He has directed eight major research projects for the Carnegie Commission, the U.S. Office of Education, the Exxon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Atlantic Richfield Foundation. As the author of 12 books and over 200 articles, he was honored by the American Education Press Association. In 1989, he was one of the three Americans awarded the title of Distinguished Lecturer by the National Science Foundation.

*Reginald Wilson*

Dr. Reginald Wilson was named Senior Scholar of the American Council on Education in October 1988. He joined the Council as Director of the Office of Minority Concerns in October 1981. Prior to that appointment he was, for nearly 10 years, President of Wayne County Community College in Detroit. Dr. Wilson is a recognized authority on the participation of minorities in higher education. He is the coauthor of *Human Development in the Urban Community*, the Editor of *Race and Equity in Higher Education*, and the author of *Civil Liberties and the U.S.* He is on the editorial boards of the *The American Journal of Education* and *The Urban Review*.

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